BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

Infoline

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- **Inflation remains at 1.6% in April**
- **Manufacturing sales up 0.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March**
- **Traveller entries to B.C. fall 1.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March**

Prices

- **British Columbia's inflation rate was 1.6% in April, unchanged from the previous month.** Energy (+3.8%) remained an upward pressure on prices, but relaxed from the double digit increases during the Fall of last year. Excluding energy, overall inflation in B.C. would have been 1.4%. Excluding both food and energy, prices rose 1.2%.

  Food prices were up 2.5% compared to 2011, with both grocery (+2.7%) and restaurant (+2.4%) bills increasing. Fresh fruit (+10.5%), meat (+5.9%), fish & and other seafood (+5.0%) costs continued to climb, while the price of fresh vegetables (−5.7%) remained lower.

  Inflation in shelter costs (+0.4%) was unchanged from March to April, as increased prices for rented accommodation (+1.2%) and utilities (+5.0%) continue to be mitigated by reduced costs associated with home ownership (−0.6%). Electricity saw a jump from the previous month, to cost 11.9% more than a year prior. Conversely, natural gas costs had fallen to 6.7% less than April 2011.

  Nationwide, inflation inched up to 2.0% in April, and B.C. (+1.6%) continued to have the second lowest inflation rate in Canada. Year over year price increases were the lowest in Alberta (+0.8%), replacing Manitoba (+1.8%) which held the first spot in the previous month. Newfoundland and Labrador (+3.0%) had the highest rate of inflation among the provinces. Clothing and footwear prices grew markedly more in B.C. (+6.8%) than the rest of Canada (+2.4%), but owned accommodation costs rose nationally (+1.7%) while falling locally (−0.6%).

  For those getting ready for summer barbequing, the average Canadian shopper paid $17.67 for a kilogram of sirloin steak in April and $5.37 for 4.54 kilograms of potatoes. Beer purchases in B.C. were 0.1% less costly than last year, but prices of alcoholic beverages were up 1.5% overall.

  Inflation inched up in both Vancouver (+1.9% *year over year*) and Victoria (+1.6%) in April compared to the rate the previous month. Calgary (+0.9%) had the lowest rate of inflation of the cities surveyed.

  Data source: Statistics Canada

- **The cost of new housing in B.C.'s two largest metropolitan areas continued to decline in March.** In Vancouver, new housing (house and land) prices edged down 0.6% over the same month in 2011, while homebuilders in the Victoria area received an average of 3.0% less for their projects.

  House prices in particular continue to exert downward pressure on new housing costs. In March, land value was up slightly (+0.4%) in Vancouver, while the price for a new house was 1.3% lower. In the capital city, both the cost of land (−0.3%) and houses (−4.1%) had fallen since last year.

  Province-wide, land purchases cost 0.3% more than March 2011, while housing cost 1.7% less. Overall house and land costs were down 0.9%. *Data source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Wholesale sales in B.C. slipped 0.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March, reversing after February's growth.** With the exception of

Report **No report this issue**

Did you know...

94% of the time the border wait at Pacific Highway crossing (entering Canada) was less than 20 minutes, during the 2010-11 fiscal year.

Data Source: CBSA

motor vehicles, most wholesaler industries saw sales dip. Particularly hard hit were wholesalers of personal and household goods, vehicle parts, and building material and supplies.

Nationally, wholesale sales inched up 0.4%, driven by strength in Quebec (+2.3%), Ontario (+0.6%) and Manitoba (+1.8%) while Saskatchewan (−7.2%) witnessed the largest decreases. *Data source: BC Stats & Statistics Canada*

- **Motor vehicle sales remain strong in 2012, with units sold in March up 9.6% from the previous year.** The increase is the second largest in Canada, after Alberta (+12.9%). Trucks made up three out of every five new vehicles sold in B.C. in March, with passenger cars making up the remainder. Nationally, there were 3.3% more motor vehicles sold than last year. Sales contracted in Quebec (−2.3%) and New Brunswick (−7.2%).
  Data source: Statistics Canada
- **Production at sawmills in B.C. was higher (+14.5%) in February than in the same month of 2011.** Both coastal (+8.8%) and interior (+15.3%) mills increased their output, with the most notable growth in the southern interior (+22.5%). Meanwhile, Canadian sawmill production rose 8.6%, despite slowed activity in Quebec (−3.6%) and Ontario (−6.9%). *Data source: Statistics Canada*
- **Manufacturers in British Columbia saw sales increase for the second month in a row, inching up 0.4% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March.** Declines in the manufacture of durables (−1.7%) were offset by growth in non-durables manufacturing (+2.6%). Increases in food (+2.5%) and paper (+2.0) manufacturing made the most positive impact, while large contractions occurred in primary metal (−5.8%) and non-metallic mineral product (−4.3%) manufacturing. These four industries made up 39% of sales by manufacturers in B.C. in March.

  Nationally, manufacturing sales climbed 1.9%, with the increase primarily focused in Ontario (+1.9%), New Brunswick (+21.3%) and Quebec (+1.2%). Manufacturing sales declined in Nova Scotia (−3.6%), Saskatchewan (−0.6%) and Manitoba (−0.1%).
  Data source: Statistics Canada
- **The number of traveller entries to Canada via B.C. fell 1.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March, with visitors declining from most major regions of the world.** The decrease continued a reversal started in February, after three months of modest gains. Both overnight (−0.7%) and same day (−1.6%) visitors from the United States dropped, for a 1.0% dip in total American entries. Travel from other countries declined 1.4%, with fewer visits from Asia (−1.2%), Europe (−1.9%) and elsewhere (−1.0%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

First Quarter in Review

- **B.C. manufacturing shipments were unchanged (+0.0%, *seasonally adjusted*) in the first quarter of 2012.** Non-durable shipments inched up 0.4%, while sales of durables fell 0.3%. Shrinking shipments for food (−1.0%), wood (−1.6%), paper (−1.5%), and primary metals (−2.7%) manufacturers were offset mainly by growth in transportation equipment (+6.9%) and plastic & rubber product (+3.4%) manufacturing. Food and wood products were the two largest manufacturing industries in B.C., together with over $3.0 billion in sales over the first quarter of 2012.
  Data Source: Statistics Canada
- **Wholesale sales in B.C. declined 0.5% (*seasonally adjusted*) in Q1 2012, while sales in Canada as a whole grew by 0.4%.** The majority of growth nationally was driven by Ontario (+1.4%), Quebec (+0.3%), Newfoundland & Labrador (+7.2%), while the largest reductions were in Saskatchewan (−8.8%), Manitoba (−2.3%), and B.C. (−0.5%).
  Data Source: Statistics Canada

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also on the **Internet** at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca or choose RSS

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/2012	% change on one year ago
BC	4,597.9	1.0
Canada	34,670.4	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 8)		
(BC - at market prices)	2010	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	203,147	5.9
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	167,140	3.0
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	36,899	1.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	26,166	2.2
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Mar 2012	3,186	0.4
Merchandise Exports - Mar 2012	2,707	-2.0
Retail Sales - Feb 2012	5,136	0.4
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Apr 2012)	one year ago	% change
BC	1.6	2.1
Vancouver	1.9	2.1
Victoria	1.6	1.9
Canada	2.0	2.7
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Apr 2012	prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	19.7	
Labour Force - BC	2,473.1	0.1
Employed - BC	2,318.8	0.9
Unemployed - BC	154.3	-10.7
		Mar 2012
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	6.2	7.0
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.3	7.2
INTEREST RATES (percent)	May 16/2012	May 18/2011
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.20	3.70
- 5 year	5.44	5.69
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	May 16/2012	May 18/2011
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0102	0.9723
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9875	1.0303
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Apr 2012	one year ago
BC	844.42	2.0
Canada	859.11	2.5

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

New RSS Feeds From BC Stats

BC Stats has published several new RSS feeds, including: Aboriginal Peoples, Business and Industry, Census, Economic Statistics, Education, Environment, Geography and Mapping, Income, Pensions, Spending and Wealth, International and Interprovincial Trade, Labour, Population, Demography and Immigration, and more.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Help/RSSFeeds.aspx

The 2011 National Household Survey

Release dates have been set as:

May 8, 2013
- Immigration; Citizenship; Place of birth; Language; Ethnic origin; Visible minorities; Religion; Aboriginal Peoples

June 26, 2013
- Labour; Education; Place of work; Commuting to work; Mobility and migration; Language of work

August 14, 2013
- Income; Earnings; Housing; Shelter costs

http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/index-eng.cfm

Census 2011 Fast Facts

According to the 2011 census, compared to other provinces, BC's population growth was second only to Alberta over the 2006 to 2011 period. In May of 2011, the census counted 4,400,057 persons in BC, up 286,570 (+7.0%) from the 2006 count. Read more on the 2011 Census page:
http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/Census/2011Census.aspx

Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, April 2012

Next week

- No subscription releases

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